Best Practice Carousel

**How do teachers access the best practice?**

Accessing this resource was very simple as information about conflict diamonds can be found in both print and on the web. This practice is good too because it can be done with a number of different topics. Basically it is a brainstorming activity that allows students to understand that the same item/concept/event can have different perspectives depending on who is viewing of telling the story.

**What is the relevance of the best practice to the curriculum and students?**

This best practice was relevant because it gives students the opportunity to see something that they are exposed to on a regular basis through home, the media or other ways in a new light. I linked this activity to the short story unit they were doing by touching upon the idea of point of view however the main focus on this activity was practice for students on something they would be exposed to in the OSSLT. In the OSSLT they would be required to look at a picture and write a short newspaper article. At the end of my brief lesson I would require students to write a newspaper article about conflict diamonds based on a picture of a child sifting through rocks in a diamond camp. Students were also exposed to a social justice issue that was both relevant and important that they may not have been exposed to or explored before.

**How was the best practice used with students?**

I put the diamond picture on a single overhead. I covered the bottom diamond so that the students could brainstorm words they relate to diamond without being influenced by the second diamond. The students came up with words such as glittery, beautiful, love, forever, money, rich, luxurious, etc. I then showed the students the second diamond which already had words such as blood, conflict, slavery, child slavery, etc on it. I asked the students if they had ever thought of these words as being associated with diamonds. I then proceeded to explain about multiple perspectives on the same topic.

**What was the effectiveness of the best practice with students?**

Students really became involved in the process of brainstorming for the first diamond because it in a way asked them their opinion about this topic or idea. They even gave me explanations as to why they choose the words that they did. When I showed them the second diamond many of them were shocked or confused because they themselves had not thought of those words. I did have two students who knew what conflict diamonds are but had not thought about this during the activity initially in a sense making them aware of how overlooked the darker or negative reality can be.

**What tips can you share for using the best practice in the classroom?**

Having brainstorming activities like this can really engage students in learning because they become part of the process. They are involved in their learning rather than be told what to know. This worked well in a social justice aspect as well because the students practiced a skill they would need for the OSSLT but were also able to relate it back to short stories. They were also able to learn a skill through a topic that is both controversial and interesting. It allows students to cover curriculum, practice a skill and become better informed and conscious thinkers at the same time.